

VZCZCXYZ0012
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHQT #0158 0191917
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 191917Z JAN 07
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6131
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 6355
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 3700
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 0719
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 2302
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ JAN 0351
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 1318
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 3033
RUEHGL/AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL PRIORITY 1734
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0027
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 000158

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: TEN YEARS
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [EC](#)
SUBJECT: GARCIA/USDEL BILAT: PERU'S QUIXOTIC MISSION

Classified By: PolOff Erik Martini for reasons 1.4 (b&d)

11. (C) Summary: Peruvian President Alan Garcia met with U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez on the margins of President Rafael Correa's inauguration ceremony. Garcia raised ATPA, the U.S./Peru free trade agreement and Peru's lonely opposition to Chavez in South America. End Summary.

Background

12. (SBU) On the margins of the Correa presidential swearing in ceremony, President Garcia met for 20 minutes privately with Secretary Gutierrez and Ambassador Jewell. Also present at the meeting was Peru's Ambassador to Ecuador Vicente Rojas.

Garcia Leads With Trade

13. (C) President Garcia opened the meeting praising the recent visit by CoDel Reid to Peru. Garcia said Senator Reid had frankly told him that while not enthusiastic about free trade agreements, he would "carefully consider" Peru's FTA. Garcia said Senator Reid told him he thought ATPA should be extended for three more years. Secretary Gutierrez responded that the Administration was committed to working for passage of the Peru FTA.

Garcia: Correa, South America Pulled Toward Chavez

14. (C) Asked for his views about President Correa, Garcia said he thought Correa was being "pulled to the left but wanted to find the center." Chavez and Castro are "very clever opponents," he said. Garcia recommended that the USG signal redlines with Correa but suggested we refrain from "harping" on issues of concern. ALBA, the Venezuelan alternative to U.S. FTAs, must be avoided at all costs, he said. Garcia complained that Peru cannot be the "Don Quixote" of South America tilting alone against Chavez; the U.S. should signal its "good faith" by approving Peru's FTA. Peru would send an ambassador back to Venezuela.

15. (C) President Garcia then reviewed quickly other South American governments' attitudes toward Chavez. He dismissed Bolivia as "bought out" and Argentina as a "leftist government from the 1960s." Chile was "playing both sides of

the issue," he said, due to "Bachelet's internal situation" and Colombia was mired in internal problems and human rights problems with Europe.

¶6. (C) Garcia reserved his harshest criticism for Brazil and President Lula da Silva. He characterized da Silva as "completely complicit" in the anti-U.S. antics of Chavez. He claimed Brazil had acted to undermine Peru's relations with Mexico, Chile and Asia, and Brazilian FM Amorim has said the Community of Andean Nations has no reason to exist. Garcia said Lula was dominated by his adviser on foreign relations, Marco Aurelio Garcia, who Garcia alleged "on the best authority" is a Cuban agent.

Comment

¶7. (C) Garcia was eager for the meeting, held in a private room within the confines of Congress literally minutes before Correa's inaugural speech. Garcia's strong pitch was that Peru is our only 'true' friend in South America. As a lonely bulwark against Chavez' Bolivarian revolution, Peru is willing to try to keep impressionable leaders like Correa from falling for Chavez' snake oil. For all this, it deserves an FTA.

¶8. (C) Secretary Gutierrez was unable to clear this message before his departure.

JEWELL